VMI Library Removes Documents At Request of Federal Agency

LEXINGTON, Va., April 28 (AP)— Some documents have been removed from library at Virginia Military Institute at the request of the National Security Agency, officials said today.

The agency, which handles secret codes used by the government and monitors worldwide communications, was criticized last year in a book that cited a number of letters that were donated to the George C. Marshall Library here as part of the papers of the late William F. Friedman, one of the agency's top cryptologists. He died in 1969.

"Some documents ... at the NSA's request ... have been put aside for evaluation," said Fred L. Hadsel, director of the George C. Marshall Research Foundation, which oversees the library. Hadsel said the library has had a "continuing relationship with the NSA and other governmental agencies and we cooperate with them."

Records at the library show that a number of papers from the Friedman collection were withdrawn from public files at the security agency's instruction.

Some of the papers were cited by author James Bamford in "The Puzzle Palace," published last year. Bamford, a Massachusetts writer, accused the security agency of maintaining excessive secrecy and abusing its powers of electronic surveillance by spying on American citizens in the 1970s.

Lt. Gen. Lincoln D. Faurer, director of the National Security Agency, said the removal of the letters was "routine" as part of the agency's "responsibility to advise and assist in the protection of NSA-related national security information."